

VZCZCXRO3073  
OO RUEHCI  
DE RUEHKA #1891/01 3381150  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 041150Z DEC 07  
FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5722  
INFO RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 9411  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 1049  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0343  
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2623  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 8205  
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 8301  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1934  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0424  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0605  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0055  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKDIA/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DHAKA 001891

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SES-O  
DEPT FOR SCA/PB, SCA/EX  
DCHA/OFDA FOR ROBERT THAYER  
AID/W FOR AA MARK WARD AND ANE ANNE DIX  
DCHA/FFP FOR MATTHEW NIMS AND PAUL NOVICK  
ROME FOR FODAG  
BANGKOK FOR RDM/A TOM DOLAN, ROB BARTON  
KATHMANDU FOR USAID OFDA BILL BERGER AND SUE MCINTYRE  
TREASURY FOR ELIZABETH WEISS AND SUSAN CHUN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [AMGT](#) [SOCI](#) [ECON](#) [PINR](#) [EAGR](#) [SENV](#)  
BG

SUBJECT: USAID/OFDA Cyclone Sidr Situation Report #10: USAID/OFDA  
Water Purification Units to Respond to Water Needs of  
Cyclone-Affected Populations

11. Summary. To reduce the effects of perennial flooding and cyclones in Bangladesh, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) has invested in preparedness and mitigation programs for a number of years, including the pre-positioning of water purification units to provide clean drinking water. In response to Cyclone Sidr in southern Bangladesh, USAID/OFDA deployed additional units to address the emergency water needs of affected populations. USAID's Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART), along with USAID/Bangladesh and the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka, are monitoring the location and functionality of the 14 USAID/OFDA water purification units currently in country. End summary.

-----  
PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION: USAID/OFDA PRE-POSITIONED WATER  
PURIFICATION UNITS IN CYCLONE-PRONE BANGLADESH  
-----

12. Water purification plays a vital role in disaster response, as safe drinking water helps prevent diarrhea and other water-borne diseases like cholera. USAID/OFDA stockpiles water purification units in warehouses and deploys them during disasters. These units provide clean drinking water and correspond to Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response. The purification units can draw water from wells, boreholes, or surface water sources. They then treat the water to reduce suspended solids, and subsequently disinfect the water. At present, each unit

USAID/OFDA deploys during disasters costs \$40,000 and has a maximum output of 10,000 liters per hour.

13. Over the past decade, USAID/OFDA has supported the operation of mobile water purification plants in Bangladesh. Prior to Cyclone Sidr, USAID-funded disaster preparedness mechanisms included six of these systems already in country. Since these systems are mobile, they facilitate rapid response to recurrent floods and cyclones in Bangladesh. Non-governmental organization (NGO) partner Save the Children operates two of these pre-positioned systems, while CARE operates the remaining four units. After centralizing the clean water supply, USAID/OFDA's implementing partners can utilize local networks to hire rickshaw drivers with 500 liter tanks to distribute water to outlying villages. This approach increases access to safe drinking water to remote areas and also creates income generating opportunities for rickshaw drivers.

-----  
USAID/OFDA RESPONDS TO WATER NEEDS DUE TO CYCLONE SIDR  
-----

14. In September, as part of ongoing preparedness programs in Bangladesh, USAID/OFDA ordered four additional water purification units. These systems arrived in country around mid-November and are now serving as added resources to the Cyclone Sidr response. Implementing partners CARE and Save the Children each received two units. Together with emergency relief commodities from USAID/OFDA's Dubai warehouse, including 2,500 hygiene kits and 2,500 water containers, these water purification systems have contributed to USAID/OFDA's early response efforts in Bangladesh.

15. Identifying water as a priority need for cyclone-affected populations, the USAID/OFDA team on the ground requested the

DHAKA 00001891 002 OF 002

delivery of four more water purification units on November 21. These additional units from USAID/OFDA's warehouse in Dubai arrived in country on November 27, along with four water storage bladders and 2,400 water containers. NGO partner World Vision received three of the units, three storage bladders, and the water containers, while Save the Children received the fourth unit and one water bladder.

16. To provide safe drinking water to cyclone-affected populations, NGO partners CARE, Save the Children, and World Vision are currently implementing 12 USAID/OFDA water purification units in the following upazilas and villages: Mongla, Khulna District; one unit in Amtali and two in Patharghata, Barguna District; Kalapara, Zianpara, and Umedpur, Patuakali District, two units in Morrelganj and one in Sarankhola, Bagerhat District; and Bandaria and Mothbaria, Pirojpur District. The remaining two USAID/OFDA units are currently under maintenance. In addition, as of December 3, the U.S. military had also provided 14,309 gallons of water to assist cyclone-affected populations.

-----  
GOB PROVISION OF WATER PURIFICATION UNITS  
-----

17. As of December 2, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that the GOB's Department of Public Health Engineering had deployed 10 mobile water purification units in Bagerhat, Barguna, and Pirojpur districts. Out of these 10 units, 7 are currently functioning to assist cyclone-affected populations. As of December 3, district and upazila authorities had distributed 30 water purification units, according to the Bangladesh military, who had also contributed to the humanitarian response with 16 units to affected areas.

PASI